

01/23/2008 - Budget Committee Minutes

Hopkinton Budget Committee Town Hall Minutes January 23, 2008

Present: Karen Irwin, Chair; David Lancaster; Danny Coen; Tom O'Donnell, HVP Representative; Joy Bloomfield, School Board Representative; Tom Congoran, Selectmen Representative; Bob Carpenter, CVP Representative; Patrice Gerseny; Jane Bradstreet and Barbara Unger.

Absent: The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm.

Chairman Irwin stated that she had a lot of detailed information but she would start with the balances of Town Trust funds. Next David Lancaster went over his budgetary concerns, starting on the Town side of the budget; or a \$308,000 or 5.7% increase in spending. Some of it this increase is defrayed by the decrease as a result of the retirement of the library bond in the amount of \$112,964 and decreases in reserve funds. The School Boards proposed budget increase of 3.37% despite the budget decrease of \$260,000 due to the completion of the capital improvement projects at Harold Martin. David was concerned about these increases.

Chairman Irwin wanted to get a better understanding of actual expenditures versus what Bob Blanchette is projecting for revenues in FY 2008. Next Chairman Irwin went over \$156,000 in equipment grant for the Fire Department budget and why the equipment line did not decrease more and whether we would need to increase the line to spend for equipment. Would like to see fuel separated for Ambulance.

Elizabeth Levy explained that the reference librarian increase was calculated at 32 hours until the end of March. Is there any reason you can't increase your request from the Foundation. Since you have an increase in demand is there any reason you can't increase your request versus increasing the operating budget so much. Heating costs are actually down in this budget.

Next Chairman Irwin asked several questions regarding the School budget. Do we get any State building aid funding for the temporary classrooms? Brian Blake stated that we did not. For revenues for the School Chairman Irwin wanted to understand the catastrophic aid calculation. Michelle Clark stated that we already know our catastrophic aid is based upon the prior year. Also Medicaid reimbursement has decreased as a result of federal changes. Most of the change is attributable to a reduction in reimbursement for children who were transported for special education. What are we expecting for increased individuals in Catastrophic Aid and Medicaid and Medicare reimbursements? Michelle stated that Building aid basically covers the interest of the bonding on building improvements. The Aspen student information system is that the system we bought last year? Are the increases in information access fees attributable to the new information system? Tom Congoran asked are the salary and benefits increases over prior years considerably different? Michelle Clark explained that health insurance costs are going down due to actual costs being considerably lower than planned. Personnel increase in the superintendent's office is due to 2 positions increasing by .6 FTE's. We budget per the contract the value of a 5 credit graduate course and enough to cover 30% of the teachers. When do we negotiate the bus

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contract? It was just finished and the bus contract actually went down due to special needs clients and out of District placements. A question was asked as to whether the teachers contract, the only contract where we prorate health benefits? Michelle Clark said she would have to review the custodial contract to see if we pay for partial benefits. A projected surplus for FY 07-08 had been reported to the Department of Revenue. The salary schedules given are reflective of what the employees have on their individual contract.

Tom O'Donnell of the Hopkinton Village Precinct went over the financing of the well. Tom O'Donnell had a revised MS-37 and warrant. Of the budget of \$166,000 a total of \$99,000 was for drilling of the new well.

Next Chairman Irwin went over a draft of the schedule for the public hearing. Tom Congoran asked to have the library budget be presented by library trustees at the public hearing.

The budget committee adjourned at 9:16 p.m. The motion made by Bob Carpenter and seconded by Joy Bloomfield.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Irwin
Chairman